

**MINUTES OF THE EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MEETING**

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2009

HANAFORD SCHOOL CAFETERIA

200 MIDDLE ROAD

EAST GREENWICH, RI 02818

**ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE
SUBJECT TO A VOTE 7:00p.m. Regular Session**

I. Call to Order

The second March meeting of the East Greenwich School Committee was held on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at the Hanaford School at 7:00p.m. Members present: JeanAnn Guliano-Chair, Anne Palumbo-Vice-Chair, Susan Records, Deidre Gifford, and Paul Martin as well as Superintendent Charles Meyers, Director of Administration, Maryanne Crawford, and Director of Special Education, Paula Dillon. Mr. Durant and Mrs. Winters were absent.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

III. Public Comments

IV. Approval of Minutes-March 3, 2009 meeting

On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mr. Martin, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2009 meeting with corrections.

V. Announcements and Recognitions

a. Cole Middle School 7th grade students were recognized for having their poems selected to be published in The Anthology of Poetry by Young Americans: They are: Chris Sgrignari, Topaz Leshin Szewczok, Olivia Sondler and Becky Scheff.

VI. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Meyers reported that the professional development day scheduled for March 20th has a theme of common assessments. He added that smaller groups are working on other projects. Mrs. Dillon noted that special education updates will be covered for her teachers.

Mr. Meyers noted that two days are being scheduled to work on a draft of the scope of work for the district's technology committee. The composition of the new technology committee will include one person from each elementary school and middle school, two people from the high school, Jerry Nettik, Susan Records, Paula Dillon, Bob Wilmarth and Charlie Meyers. Janet Novack, who has experience as an educator, will be the facilitator. Mr. Meyers stated that he sent out an email to all Principals to try to recruit these people. Mr. Meyers added that Ms. Novack is a Six Sigma Process Analyst/Consultant with over 15 years experience in High Tech and Telecom Industries. The report will be given to the School Committee by mid June. Mr. Meyers stated that there will be a meeting with Ms. Novack before the meetings on March 30th and 31st. Mrs. Records stated that the technology purchases for the next fiscal year should be aligned. She also feels that Ms. Novack should ask what our issues are. Mrs.

Records noted that she sees this new technology committee as a super user group. Mrs. Gifford feels that these two days would be better used if pre-work was done. She would like this committee to hone in on what the laptop issues are at the high school. Mr. Meyers noted that the State of Rhode Island has asked us to fill out a technology questionnaire that could be used for this group. Mrs. Gifford asked if both PC's and Mac's needed to be in the district. Mr. Meyers responded that Apple may be better able to address the laptop issue. Mrs. Records stated that certain applications don't lend themselves to a Mac.

Mr. Meyers handed out the FY 2009 Education Aid Proposal. He stated that the total of 1.6 million is a reduction of 15%. Mrs. Gifford asked how we could realize those savings if retirements don't take place until after July 1st. She also asked about IDEA money we are supposed to receive, wondering why that money is less than what Senator Reed's office stated. Mrs. Guliano asked if the Governor was going to continue to fund IDEA. Mr. Meyers responded that the money may not come with the same strings attached.

Mr. Meyers handed out a retirement letter to the Committee. He stated that working in East Greenwich for the past 16 years has been the highlight of his career and he is leaving to pursue other interests. Mrs. Guliano noted that Mr. Meyers came in as a Superintendent in a time of need and has

shown great leadership. She feels that the new superintendent should make a smooth transition. Mr. Martin stated that Mr. Meyers

was the third Superintendent he worked with while he was on the School Committee, and regrets seeing him leave. Mr. Martin feels there will be no problem finding candidates. He also liked the idea that we were able to bring Mr. Meyers in from the ranks.

VII. Action Items

a. Extension of April 1 Deadline for Early Retirement Notification

Mr. Meyers stated that in light of the April 1st deadline for early retirement notification, and the uncertainty in the Governor's budgets, he is asking the School Committee to allow teachers who properly notify him by April 1st to have until May 1st to revoke that decision. Mrs. Records made a motion to extend this deadline. This was seconded by Mr. Martin and was unanimous.

b. Coaching Appointments

Mr. Palumbo made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to approve the following coaching recommendations: The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Martin asked to have the number of people who applied put of the agenda form.

i. Mathew Marion, volunteer tennis for spring 2009 at EGHS

ii. David Kelaghan, head boys' tennis for spring 2009 at EGHS

iii. Brian Trapani, head boys' lacrosse for spring 2009 at EGHS

c. Extension of Parental Leave

Mr. Martin made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the parental leave extension of Kelli O'Neill, Social Studies Teacher at Cole Middle School, from February 1, 2009 to April 1, 2009. The motion passed unanimously.

e. Out-of-State Trip

Mrs. Records made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Martin to approve the following out-of-state trip:

i. East Greenwich High School Golf Team to Pinehurst, North Carolina, during the April 2009 school vacation. Mrs. Palumbo asked if the same field trip rules apply if it is during school vacation. Mr. Meyers stated that the Committee could approve the trip pending receipt of the field trip form. Mr. Martin's main concern is that students are being driver in a van. He asked if we have the proper insurance. Mrs. Crawford stated that if the School Committee sanctions the trip, we are covered by our insurance for any liability and exposure. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. Financial Report

Mrs. Crawford stated that the Finance Committee made a recommendation that we go out to bid for insurance. She noted that Blue Cross has agreed to lower our administrative fees, but West Bay has recommended that we don't go out to bid this year. Mrs. Crawford also noted that our claims have increased significantly this year, and we would need to have a month and a half of no claims to take care of the deficit. Mrs. Crawford stated that a premium based environment will result in higher premiums. She added that if we leave West Bay prior to the expiration of our contract in 2012, we would have to pay back money. Mrs. Crawford will come back to the School Committee to ask that we stay with West Bay. Mrs. Gifford stated that the state employee's health plan is doing some innovative things around incentives for wellness. She stated that we may want to look into getting some feedback on our claims history that would

direct us towards prevention activities for employees.

VIII. Discussion

a. Charge for Personnel and Technology Subcommittees

Mrs. Records stated that for the Personnel Subcommittee, her purpose is to engage everyone in personnel decisions, and not have as much hierarchy but a more democratic type of management. She feels we need a subcommittee to bring people together. It was noted that Mrs. Palumbo and Mr. Durant would like to be on the subcommittee. She will bring the charge back to the School Committee with the changes suggested. Mrs. Records would like a team of people for all hires, noting that a good example is the high school scheduling committee. Mr. Meyers noted that the Superintendent is not involved in the process for new hires since it is done by the building principal. He added that all teacher, administrative, and classified applications are put on School Spring. Mr.

340

Martin feels that this subcommittee will save the School Committee time. Mrs. Records noted that the first task is the employee questionnaire.

The Technology Committee is also a new subcommittee to make improvements in the immediate future. Mrs. Records feels that the new technology committee should be the technology steering committee made up of super users. Mrs. Guliano asked Mrs. Records

if her subcommittee could be combined with the new technology committee proposed by Mr. Meyers. Mrs. Records stated that we can incorporate the short term plans. Mrs. Guliano would like the charge re-drafted.

IX. Subcommittee Reports

a. Building Committee Report

Mr. Meyers stated that the building committee met on March 4th and spent time looking at the Northeast Collaborative for High Performing Schools requirements to explore sustainable building design. They looked at wind turbine technology, and geothermal technology, and had engineers from SMMA in attendance. The building committee voted to devote resources to rain water harvesting. Energy efficiency with walls and roofs and the orientation of the building was also looked at. The feeling of the group is not to pursue any expensive designs. Mr. Meyers stated that we are well above all the requirements plus another fifteen elements, even though some people feel we should be doing more. Mrs. Gifford stated that it doesn't seem there were that many options available for us.

X. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Meyers noted that hot water issues at Frenchtown which were expressed at a previous meeting have been corrected with some additional sinks, and the fountains at the high school will be fixed. Mrs. Gifford stated that she heard that the number of bathrooms which can be used are limited during the day at the high school because of supervision issues. Mr. Meyers will look into this.

Mrs. Guliano stated that the capital improvement fund is a revolving

fund and is not part of the bond.

Mr. Martin stated that by the next School Committee meeting, he will have visited five schools and will give a brief report. Mrs. Palumbo stated that school visitations should be on the agenda for April 7th.

Mr. Martin reminded members that Jerry Meyer, from the Chamber of Commerce, will be at the April 7th meeting to take a formal photo of the School Committee. This will be done ten minutes before the meeting if all members are present. He also would like to place a ¼ page ad in the yearbook from the School Committee.

Mrs. Records stated that we should have a second reading of the charge for the personnel and technology subcommittees on the next agenda.

XI. On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mrs. Records, the Committee, being polled individually, voted unanimously to adjourn and go into Executive Session at 9:05p.m. under R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a) (2) Teacher Contract Negotiations.

Respectfully submitted,

Virginia Giuliani